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ABSTRACT

This book is a collection of expository essays examining the "silence" in early childhood classrooms concerning AIDS. The book also addresses questions of gender, sexuality, psychology, epistemology, and ethics in childhood and adolescent education. The introduction details how a gay, AIDS educator and advocate came to his current perspective regarding AIDS and early childhood education. Chapter 1, "HIV/AIDS: The Politics of an Epidemic," establishes a rationale for HIV/AIDS education that expands traditional ideas about health education and disease prevention, exploring the social and political construction of the disease. Chapter 2, "Responding to Children in Time," looks at the basic educational issues raised by HIV/AIDS, noting how understandings of human mortality impede or facilitate the creation of a socially relevant curriculum. Chapter 3, "HIV/AIDS Education: Toward a Collaborative Curriculum," discusses the reluctance of classroom teachers to talk about AIDS with younger students, and the narrow, ineffective approaches taken with adolescents. Chapters 4, "Developmentalism and the Aims of Education," and 5, "Contours of Ignorance," examine how society thinks about children and childhood, and how that thinking becomes a major barrier to discussing critical social issues in schools. The next three chapters address issues of identity and community from different perspectives: chapter 6, "Curricular Languages: Queering Feminist Perspectives," focuses on language, the centrality of narrative knowing, the androcentric language of curriculum makers, and the ways that gay men may find to join in feminist conversations; chapter 7 "How Do We Know? And Other Questions of the Closet," explores diverse experiences of "the closet" and what they teach about the ambiguity of knowledge; and

chapter 8 "The Politics of Identity and the Differences Inside Me," looks at the stereotypes that link gay persons and children in the popular imagination. A list of over 200 references is included.
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